

compulsory subject in Vernacular Schools would make the pupils better able to receive technical instruction and would help to solve the problem of unemployment.

Pupils belonging to the depressed classes should be supplied with books, slates, etc., free of cost, and they should also be given the noon meal.

There should be at least one or two schools in every taluk for imparting instruction in weaving, mat-making and other industrial matters.

Pupils should be permitted to appear for the School Final Examination provided they had completed their course of studies in Form VI.

He then urged the necessity for opening the Geology chair in the Science College. This, he said, was promised by Dewan Mr. Raghaviah at the last session of the Assembly, but nothing had been done in the matter.

Lastly, he represented that the curricula of studies in Girls' Schools and the Women's College required thorough revision. After the first four classes in Vernacular Schools and the first three classes in English Schools there should be two courses of studies, one calculated to impart general instruction to girls which would make them better fitted for domestic life. The other course might be as it was and could be chosen by those who desired university degrees or wished to compete with men in public life.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Govindan Padmanabhan, in regard to your first point, 'the shift system' is already being tried in several schools and is being watched carefully.

2. There is one other specific point in your representation, *viz.*, the constitution of a Geology chair. I shall take that question up and try to find out why it is held in abeyance and why it cannot be revived.

3. All the other points you have touched upon deal largely with the question of the general system of education in the country and, in respect of this, I will invite your attention to the remarks, in the matter of policy, I made in my opening address.

80. Teachers in Vernacular Schools.

MR. KANAKKU MARTANDA PILLAI PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Member, Chirayinkil taluk, Group I*) observed that the condition of teachers of departmental and grant-in-aid Vernacular Schools was very miserable and regretted that the Government did not realise it and take the necessary steps to place them on a better footing. The salaries in other departments of the State had undergone two or more revisions, and it was only then that there was a revision of the salaries of the Education Department. But the status in society and the responsibilities of the teacher were high. It was the teacher who made the young student of to-day the citizen of tomorrow and at once serviceable to his home and country. It was therefore of the greatest importance that the teachers should be placed on a higher status as regards their pay. It was not just that, in this matter, the Government should plead lack of funds. He then pointed out the ways by which the funds might be found. These were—

- (1) Reduction of unnecessary appointments.
- (2) Reduction of salaries of high-paid officers.
- (3) The introduction of the 'shift system' in all schools, departmental and aided.
- (4) Reduction in the number of teachers by the introduction of the 'shift system' and by amalgamating the several divisions of the higher classes so that there might be 60 to 75 pupils in a class under one teacher.
- (5) Government should publish the text-books themselves, in which case, the profits which now accrued to the book-sellers would accrue to the Government.
- (6) Abolition of some schools too near each other. In the lower classes, girls also might be admitted and the need for those classes in the girls' schools might thereby be avoided.

(7) Retrenchment in the expenditure on English Schools.

There was discontent among the teachers on account of unsatisfactory grade-promotions. The introduction of time-scale of pay would remove the grievances.

Then, in regard to the salary of teachers in grant-in-aid schools, the amount of the grant allowed by the Government was all the pay they received. He suggested the following measures for ameliorating their condition :—

(1) The salaries of teachers of aided schools should be raised to three-fourths of the salary of teachers in departmental schools.

(2) The service of the teachers in aided schools should be counted as pensionable when they were entertained in any department under the Government.

(3) When vacancies arose in the departmental schools, recruitment should be made from the ranks of the aided school teachers.

Lastly, he requested that the pay of the schoolmasters in departmental schools should be raised to at least Rs. 18.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai, the subject of the improvement of the pay and prospects of Vernacular School teachers is a very important and serious one; and as you are aware, the Government have been viewing the matter sympathetically for some time past. The magnitude of the question, however, makes it difficult of achievement in a moment. You know that the number of Vernacular School teachers is between 6,000 and 7,000. And to improve their pay by even a rupee a month will cost a lakh of rupees more and that is not commensurate with what has been thought to be necessary for them. To accept your suggestion to raise the minimum pay to Rs. 18 will cost the Government nearly 3.5 lakhs of rupees a year.

2. You also want the pay of the grant-in-aid teachers to be increased. In respect of that, you have lost sight of one very important fact. The Rs. 7½ given by the Government is only a grant-in-aid. It is not intended to be the sum total of the pay of the teachers. If the Managers of private schools will realise their responsibilities—I may go further and say the stern duty that lies upon them—they should add as much as the Government give and not make the Government grant-in-aid the sole remuneration of poor people who are teachers under them.

3. As I said, the Government are in entire sympathy with the subject-matter of your representation, that is, the improvement of the pay and prospects of Vernacular School teachers. It is purely a matter of ways and means; the Government have to find three or four lakhs of rupees and as you will see from my opening address, the question has to be considered whether other interests besides the Government should not be called upon to bear their share by means of a cess or by some other means. And if the constituency that you represent and others are anxious that the pay of the teachers should be improved, I have no doubt that all of you will bear cheerfully, if and when you are asked, a portion of the cost. With these general remarks, I have only to say that what you have represented will be noted.

81. Rebuilding the English Girls' School, Attingal.

THE REV. MR. K. JOSHUA (*Member, Municipal Council, Attingal*) brought to the notice of the Government the difficulties the Attingal Municipality was experiencing in conducting an English Girls' School at Attingal. The school contained two classes, the Preparatory class and Form I, and the Municipality was proposing to open Form II also the following school year. But as ill-luck would have it, the school building was burnt down and it was found difficult to raise the necessary funds to reconstruct the building. He therefore requested the Government to help the Municipality with half the amount required for reconstructing the building and said that the Municipality would then find the balance by raising a loan.

He also requested that the Municipality be helped with a Government grant for conducting the school.